

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 253

August 4, 1999, 11:09 a.m.
Page S-10155 Temp. Record

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS/3rd Agriculture Aid Proposal (Roberts)

SUBJECT: Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2000 . . . S. 1233. Cochran motion to table the Roberts amendment No. 1509 to the Lott (for Daschle) amendment No. 1499, as amended.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 66-33

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1233, the Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2000, will provide \$60.710 billion in new budget authority (of which \$13.98 billion will be discretionary budget authority, which is the amount provided in fiscal year 1999) for fiscal year 2000. Loan authorizations will total \$9.650 billion.

The Lott (for Daschle) amendment, as amended, would provide \$10.8 billion in emergency agricultural assistance and would make various statutory changes to agriculture programs. See vote No. 249 for details and debate. As amended, it would require congressional approval to impose unilateral agricultural or medical sanctions (see vote No. 251).

The Roberts amendment would enact a modified version of the Cochran amendment which the Senate earlier failed to table, and which was then withdrawn (see vote No. 249). Major differences between this amendment and the earlier amendment include the following: it would add \$400 million for crop insurance premium reductions; it would add \$400 million for disaster payments for 1999 crop losses; it would reduce proposed livestock assistance to \$250 million; and it would reduce funding for specialty crops (such as sugar, peanuts, and tobacco) to a total of \$300 million and would give the Secretary of Agriculture the discretion to decide how that funding should be distributed. The total cost of the amendment would be \$7.6 billion. Most of the aid would still be provided through agriculture market transition (AMTA) payments, which, once enacted, would get assistance to individual farmers within 10 days.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Cochran moved to table the Roberts amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

(See other side)

YEAS (66)			NAYS (33)		NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (21 or 39%)	Democrats (45 or 100%)		Republicans (33 or 61%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
Bond	Akaka	Kennedy	Abraham	Hatch	Mack ⁻² EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: 1—Official Business 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other SYMBOLS: AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
Bunning	Baucus	Kerrey	Allard	Hutchinson		
Chafee	Bayh	Kerry	Ashcroft	Inhofe		
Cochran	Biden	Kohl	Bennett	Kyl		
Coverdell	Bingaman	Landrieu	Brownback	McCain		
Domenici	Boxer	Lautenberg	Burns	Murkowski		
Frist	Breaux	Leahy	Campbell	Nickles		
Gramm	Bryan	Levin	Collins	Roberts		
Gregg	Byrd	Lieberman	Craig	Roth		
Helms	Cleland	Lincoln	Crapo	Santorum		
Hutchison	Conrad	Mikulski	DeWine	Smith, Bob (I)		
Jeffords	Daschle	Moynihan	Enzi	Smith, Gordon		
Lott	Dodd	Murray	Fitzgerald	Snowe		
Lugar	Dorgan	Reed	Gorton	Specter		
McConnell	Durbin	Reid	Grams	Stevens		
Sessions	Edwards	Robb	Grassley	Thomas		
Shelby	Feingold	Rockefeller	Hagel			
Thompson	Feinstein	Sarbanes				
Thurmond	Graham	Schumer				
Voinovich	Harkin	Torricelli				
Warner	Hollings	Wellstone				
	Inouye	Wyden				
	Johnson					

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

Argument 1:

This amendment would enact a modified version of the Cochran amendment. It would take most of the provisions of the Cochran amendment, and it would increase spending in a few areas. Many of us are concerned that we are spending an awful lot of this year's budget surplus on aid for failures of crops that in some cases may not even fail--the season is not over, and many crops have yet to be harvested. We are just guessing, and guessing high, on how much aid may be warranted. We want to use as much of the surplus as possible for Social Security and Medicare reforms. It makes many of us very uneasy to be in what seems to be a bidding war between the two parties as to who will give the most money to agriculture. The Roberts amendment has been offered in a good-faith effort to try to move closer to the Democrat's position on how aid will be given and on how much aid will be given. We are willing to examine individual elements of it further, but at this point we cannot accept it as a compromise.

Argument 2:

There are some very good parts to this proposal. It is definitely moving in the right direction, especially with its provision to add \$400 million for crop insurance. However, it still would not go nearly far enough. Most of the aid would still be given through AMTA payments, and not nearly enough money would be provided for disaster payments. Had our colleagues who drafted this amendment spoken with more Democrats to work out a compromise we believe a better alternative could have been crafted. We very much appreciate the efforts of the sponsor of this amendment; we are glad that compromises are now finally being discussed. We must oppose this amendment, but we applaud the progress that is being made.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The fact that this amendment is drawing opposition from both sides shows that it indeed contains compromises. The complaint we have heard from some Democrats is that we ought to have consulted with Democrats in the drafting of this amendment. In response, we note that it is pretty obvious that we did, because the changes that we have made have been to incorporate ideas that were in the Daschle amendment. We have worked with Democrats on this amendment, even though we could probably force through an aid package without their support, because we want to have a bipartisan farm policy. It is apparent that this amendment will not pass; our hope is that it will serve as a basis for continuing negotiations and an eventual bipartisan solution.